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General Assembly

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Seventy-first session
Agenda item 27
Advancement of women

Letter dated 3 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a summary of the World Assembly for Women 2016, held in Tokyo on 13 and 14 December 2016 (see annex).

This was the third year the World Assembly for Women has been held. The Assembly is one of the efforts of the Japanese Government to realize a "society where women shine", which is a top priority of the Abe administration. The theme of the Assembly in 2016 was "WAW! for Action", since 2016 had been a year of action for Japan and the world. In the light of this, the goal of the Assembly in 2016 was for participants to discuss and learn about actions and lessons on promoting women's participation around the world and to further accelerate following actions.

We received many guests and participants, including three senior officials of the United Nations: Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme; Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund; and Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

I would be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Koro **Bessho**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Japan
to the United Nations

17-03730 (E) 130317

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Annex to the letter dated 3 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Summary based on the proposals of participants of the World Assembly for Women, Tokyo 2016

Developing the capacity of women and promoting their participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)

Break away from negative stereotypes

Concrete proposals:

- Encourage girls' interest in STEM fields. Teachers and parents, especially mothers, play an important role.
- Promote the social value of STEM fields and their role in solving a variety of problems.

Promote interaction with role models and increase opportunities to learn about STEM fields

Concrete proposals:

- Encourage female scientists to teach students about their careers in STEM fields and provide other opportunities to interact with younger generations.
- Introduce the careers of women who play important roles in STEM fields through television programmes and other forms of media.
- Encourage female students as well as women to proactively design their career plans to create a gender-equal environment.

Increase cooperation and communication between public and private sectors

Concrete proposals:

- Have companies and organizations encourage and support women to build careers in STEM fields, leading to the empowerment of women in STEM fields.
- Publicize the need by human resources for women engaging in the STEM fields in the private sector and disseminate what women can do and how they can shine in the area.
- Collect and utilize data about the gender ratio in STEM and other fields.
- Consolidate systems to support all stages of women's careers, including the reinstatement of female employees who have previously left their jobs for pregnancy or other reasons.
- Consolidate systems and environments which enable people to take advantage of mentor programmes and other supporting tools, regardless of their affiliated organizations, for career development in the STEM fields.

Promote overall gender equality in society to enhance women's participation in STEM fields

Concrete proposals:

- Promote work-life management.

- Make efforts to dispel gender norms and unconscious bias in both the political and business sectors.
- Formulate policies that reflect a large range of the public voice.

Promoting women's leadership

Break down the stereotype of female leaders

Concrete proposals:

- Promote training at all levels to abolish the stereotype of female leaders.
- Encourage all members of society, especially male family members and friends/colleagues, to support female participation. Male leaders should recognize women's empowerment as a priority issue and reform accordingly.
- Ensure that children are treated equally at home regardless of their gender.
- Proactively promote the participation of women in both the public and private sectors.

Enrich systems to enhance women's leadership

Concrete proposals:

- Consider adopting new systems and affirmative taxation systems in order to increase the number of women leaders.
- Enhance childcare at offices and other facilities both in number and quality; it is particularly important to fully equip the facilities for part-time workers.
- Introduce a flextime system.
- Increase men's commitment to increasing women leaders and change awareness at the managerial level.
- Support female entrepreneurs by sending advisers, providing monetary support, renting workspace, etc.

Work-life management 2.0

Promote changing attitudes towards working and role-sharing

Concrete proposals:

- Encourage company leaders to raise awareness of the new ways of working and role-sharing; changing the mindset of their employees should be seen not only as a personal benefit but also as a successful business move.
- Incentivize evaluations of company management reforms to encourage flexible and diverse ways of working.
- Introduce new types of evaluations and commendations for company management to use to evaluate workplace attitude reform attempts.
- Proactively use mass media and mentors to dispel the traditional and stereotypical ideas of role-sharing at work, home and in society.
- Promote the potential positive effects of changing attitudes, including a new market geared towards men at home.

Develop and implement tools to achieve flexible working environments

Concrete proposals:

- Actively adopt flextime and reduced working hours.
- Use information and communications technology (ICT) to improve flexible working hours and work locations. Encourage leaders to promote the use of ICT (including by potentially introducing mandatory teleworking) and provide all essential equipment.
- Introduce new ways of working that are not determined by the traditional model in order to improve productivity and time management.

Promote data collection and accessibility to the relevant useful information

Concrete proposals:

- Gather useful information, such as the correlation between work hours and productivity and challenges to women's participation in the workplace, and utilize it to raise awareness and reform effectively.
- Promote network-building to share experience, efforts and information, such as policies and regulations and their impact on women's participation in society.
- Promote adopting appropriate numerical target and monitoring mechanisms.

Enable a working environment that supports life events

Concrete proposals:

- Enrich and facilitate access to childcare and nursing care services. Consider utilizing the retired generation and the neighbouring community.
- Enhance a supportive environment by providing recurring training which encourages women to return to their work and to continue their career development.
- Enrich the working environment and motivate men to participate in housework and childcare by promoting taking childcare leave and so on.

Women's well-being, especially improving sexual and reproductive health and rights

Advocacy, promotion and familiarization of reproductive health and rights

Concrete proposals:

- Recognize that women's economic empowerment is impossible unless women are healthy, and organize, promote and familiarize advocacy campaigns that deal with reproductive health and rights issues that women experience as lifelong issues.
- Improve health services and increase access to affordable, quality reproductive health services for women as they wish, acknowledging that reproductive health and rights are key to achieving universal health coverage.
- Recognize that, during humanitarian crises, women are at a higher risk of dying than men, formulate emergency response/disaster prevention programmes that consider risks unique to women and respond to the unique needs of women, such as reproductive health, when responding to crises. Include workplaces, leaders of local communities, organizations, teachers and

parents as sources for advocacy and awareness-raising, enabling individuals to learn how to understand their health conditions and make the best choices possible.

- Provide sexual education programmes from the youth perspective, and make them youth-oriented. By promoting sexual education programmes led by youth, young men and women can advocate among peers on their own issues.
- Utilize private sector resources and increase public-private partnerships to secure lifelong health.

Adopt a comprehensive approach for change

Concrete proposals:

- Change social norms themselves.
- Abolish sexually discriminatory laws and policies.
- Nominate (and praise) role models, agents and other individuals, especially men, who set an example of social change. Create a collaborative network of community organizations and establish common ground among stakeholders, including teachers and local community and religious leaders.
- Ensure that education targets both genders. Informal education, in the homes and communities, is equally as important as formal education.
- Include women's voices in all decision-making processes regarding reproductive health and rights.

Collecting and sharing data

Concrete proposals:

- Collect and share good practices of women's health policies.
- Recognize and deal with the lack of relevant data when promoting women's health.

Participation and empowerment of women in peace and security

Promote the participation of women in peacebuilding

Concrete proposals:

Promote the participation of women in decision-making.

- Increase the number of women at the decision-making level in peacekeeping forces, police, Parliament, etc., and promote a system with equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes.
- Increase gender advisers who have a strong influence on the decision-making of peacekeeping forces.
- Make and implement a national action plan to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and establish a mechanism for its monitoring and evaluation with accountability.
- Promote the participation of women in policymaking, especially in Parliament, and develop policy from women's perspectives.
- Promote policies and make plans that consider women and children by promoting women's participation in making and implementing recovery plans after a natural disaster.

Promote the participation of women in the field.

- Promote the participation of women, especially at the senior level, on the front line of peacekeeping operations, in order to contribute to decreasing the number of victims of sexual violence, and to providing better care for those victims.
- Increase the number of female doctors and police officers in the field and at camps in order to prevent and assist victims of gender-based violence.

Strengthen training

Concrete proposals:

- Strengthen training on women, peace and security for leaders and future leaders of major institutions, and promote top-down change.
- Provide education on women, peace and security and basic gender training at national defence universities, research institutes, national defence medical colleges, institutes for developing lawyers and judges and training institutes for administrative officials and for prospective public servants.
- Provide training to enhance the resilience of women in the community and help them prepare, mentally and physically, for how to act at the time of conflict and natural disaster.
- Train women as educators to spread disaster risk reduction education.

Strengthen efforts to address gender-based violence

Concrete proposals:

- Focus more on gender-based violence in conflict.
- Strengthen the collection of data on gender-based violence and best practices for addressing gender-based violence, and share them with male experts.
- Strengthen speedy and holistic systems to prevent and respond to gender-based violence by increasing the number of female experts such as doctors, nurses, police officers, counsellors and those in the legal professions (judges, public prosecutors and lawyers), etc.
- Use technology to effectively prevent gender-based violence.

Gender equality from a youth perspective: current situation and challenges

Concrete proposals:

- Young men and women, as future leaders, should contribute to creating a gender-equal society. Encourage other youth to join the cause.
- Recommend that governments abolish discriminatory laws based on gender and improve the legal frameworks for young women who are not protected by the current laws and systems.
- Recommend that governments develop a system to reflect the youth voice on policies and establish a forum for political dialog with youth.
- Propose to the Japanese Government that it lead gender equality in the world and in the field of international cooperation.

Innovation from local communities: towards a society where women "truly" shine

For women and men hoping to make local communities where women can live and work comfortably

Concrete proposals:

- Develop women's confidence and nurture self-esteem in order to overcome patriarchal authority and stereotypes based on age by encouraging them to take interest in new issues outside the daily routine and get experience, knowledge and techniques, and promote solidarity with others in the same situation.
- Find role models who have the courage to step forward and achieve their goals.
- Be the change maker, as innovation brings change not only to technological aspects but to social systems and social norms, and leads to self-improvement.

For local communities

Concrete proposals:

- Recognize that communities can be improved by accepting diversity. People coming from outside of the community could bring knowledge and resources to make a positive impact. People from outside of the community often find valuable local resources which are often neglected by people within the community.
- Establish systems to include the perspectives of women, young women and girls in the decision-making process.
- Analyse the data of large cities and local communities regarding women's participation, rural-urban migration, income, etc., and implement measures to address the diminishing population in local communities.

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General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Seventy-first session
Agenda item 32
Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Identical letters dated 7 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement dated 5 March 2017 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the closure of the so-called crossing points in the occupied Abkhazia region.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 32, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kaha **Imnadze**
Permanent Representative

17-03912 (E) 130317

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Annex to the identical letters dated 7 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the closure of the so-called crossing points in the occupied Abkhazia region

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia condemns the closure of the so-called crossing points by the Russian occupation regime in the villages of Nabakevi and Otobaia in the Abkhazia region. It is noteworthy that, during 2016, the representatives of the occupation regime closed the so-called crossing points in the villages of Tagiloni and Lekukhona. On 5 March 2017, they abolished two more so-called crossing points along the occupation line.

This decision grossly violates the fundamental rights to freedom of movement, privacy and family life and access to education and health care for the local population, and serves to isolate the occupied Abkhazia region from the rest of the world. The decrease in the number of the so-called crossing points along the occupation line will aggravate an already difficult humanitarian situation in the Abkhazia region, especially the life of vulnerable groups, such as older persons, people in need of medical care or medical evacuation and schoolchildren, which will provoke further destabilization of the situation on the ground.

Despite clear-cut appeals by the international community, including the United Nations, the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the United States of America, Lithuania and Japan, it seems that the Russian occupation regime in Sokhumi made the decision to continue the destructive policy and to impede the peaceful conflict-resolution efforts of the Georgian Government.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs calls upon the Russian Federation to refrain from the provocative actions against Georgia, respect the fundamental principles of international law and the commitments taken under the European Union-mediated 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement and take a responsible approach to the prevention of an escalation of tensions on the ground.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs appeals to the international community to duly assess the tendency to close so-called crossing points and isolate the occupied regions and the so-called referendum to be held on 9 April in the Tskhinvali region, and to take effective measures with regard to Russia's illegal steps to undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Seventy-first session
Agenda items 32, 37 and 39

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Letter dated 7 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to you regarding the letter dated 12 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia addressed to the Secretary-General (A/71/749-S/2017/42).

The said letter not only failed to respond to our comments (see A/71/627-S/2016/986) with regard to the allegations made by Armenia in its written communication for the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" (A/71/91) but also provided yet another example of Armenia's falsifications and manifest disregard of international law.

The letter also left unaddressed the direct question as to why Armenia resorts to such allegations through a written communication for the report of the Secretary-General relating to Cuba, instead of tackling directly the issue of the so-called "blockade" where appropriate: in the General Assembly or the Security Council, given its "continuity".

The answer is very simple and clear. There is no hint of any blockade by Azerbaijan against Armenia.

As is well known, economic relations and land communication between our countries were interrupted because of Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan and the resulting military occupation of a significant part of my country's territory. The war waged by Armenia claimed the lives of tens of thousands of people, ruined cities and livelihoods and resulted in the forcible expulsion of more than 1 million

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Azerbaijanis from their homes and properties, while thousands of people went missing in connection with the conflict.

It should be particularly noted that, since the very first day of the conflict, combat operations have been conducted exclusively inside the territory of Azerbaijan, almost in the middle of the country, affecting its civilian population and infrastructure.

The war also has had a serious negative economic and humanitarian impact on the Nakhchyvan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan, which is separated from the main part of the country by the territory of Armenia. The railroad communication between Baku and Nakhchyvan ceased its operations as a result of the attacks and robberies that passenger and cargo trains had been regularly subjected to since 1989 while passing through the territory of Armenia. Later, the Armenian section of the railway route connecting Azerbaijan with its Nakhchyvan Autonomous Republic was destroyed and dismantled.

It is no coincidence that, besides mere assertion, the aforementioned letter failed to provide a single piece of evidence of the existence of any successful example of "developing economic linkages and building confidence between conflicting parties", of which one is an aggressor and the other is the object of the aggression. It would be nonsense for a country whose territory is under military occupation, whose hundreds of thousands of citizens were subjected to atrocious crimes and notorious ethnic cleansing, to provide the aggressor access to its territory and engage with it in any economic relations.

In its resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), the Security Council acknowledged the fact that acts of military force were committed against Azerbaijan; that such acts are unlawful and incompatible with the prohibition of the use of armed force in international relations and in contradiction with the Charter of the United Nations and its purposes; and that they constitute an obvious violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, specifically as pertains to Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter.

In those resolutions, the Security Council never qualified interruptions of economic or other relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan as a blockade or a unilateral coercive measure, as the Armenian side tries to assert, and clearly made the removal of all obstacles to communications and transportation conditional upon the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.[1]

Most importantly, in the context of specific determinations made by the Security Council, Armenia's actions should be seen as a serious breach of obligations under peremptory norms (*jus cogens*) of general international law, which gives rise to duties of States to cooperate in order to bring such a breach to an end by lawful means and not to recognize as lawful a situation created by it, nor render aid or assistance in maintaining that situation.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 62/243, entitled "The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan", reaffirmed that "no State shall recognize as lawful the situation resulting from the occupation of the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, nor render aid or assistance in maintaining this situation".

[1] See Security Council resolutions 853 (1993), paras. 3-5, and 874 (1993), para. 5.

As the International Law Commission recognized in article 54 of the articles on State responsibility, which were commended to States by General Assembly resolution 56/83 of 12 December 2001, any State has the right to take lawful measures against the responsible State to ensure cessation of the breach and reparation in the interests of the injured State or of the beneficiaries of the obligation breached.

Based on the principle of non-recognition, not only Azerbaijan but also a number of other States Members of the United Nations, in their efforts to limit the consequences of gross violations of international law by Armenia, refrain from either establishing diplomatic or consular relations with Armenia or minimizing them, as well as from entering into economic and trade cooperation with it.

In its resolution 10/43-POL of 19 October 2016, entitled "Aggression of the Republic of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan", the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation called upon member States, as well as other members of the international community, "to use such effective political and economic measures, as required, in order to put an end to Armenian aggression and occupation of the Azerbaijani territories, including, inter alia, through refraining from economic activities in and investments to the Republic of Armenia, as well as through limiting overall cooperation with the Republic of Armenia".

Armenia's attempts to speculate on a sensitive domain of human rights are fundamentally flawed and beneath all criticism. It is irrefutable that Armenia cannot demand privileges at the very core of which are gross and systematic violations of international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, and the discriminatory denial of fundamental rights and freedoms with respect to the significantly larger Azerbaijani population expelled from, and denied access to, their homes and properties in both Armenia and the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

The problems Armenia is facing in the socioeconomic sphere, such as the significant drop in major segments of its economy in recent years and high migration from the country of its citizens in search of a better life, are caused mostly by the policy of aggression, hatred and animosity pursued by the leadership of Armenia. This policy totally does a disservice to the genuine interests, aspirations and well-being of the Armenian people, which can be ensured only through good-neighbourly relations.

Peace, security and stability are achievable, first and foremost, only if the consequences of Armenia's aggression and occupation are removed, thereby ensuring that its armed forces are immediately, unconditionally and completely withdrawn from the territories of Azerbaijan, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of my country are restored and the right of internally displaced Azerbaijanis to return to their homes is guaranteed and implemented.

The earlier the leadership of Armenia realizes the lack of any prospect of its dangerous political agenda, the sooner peace and security will be restored.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 32, 37 and 39, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative